

ON OVERCOMING
THE CULT OF THE INDIVIDUAL
AND ITS CONSEQUENCES



EX LIBRIS
UNIVERSITATIS
ALBERTENSIS

*A Resolution of the
Central Committee of the
Communist Party of the Soviet Union*



PRESS OFFICE OF THE U.S.S.R. EMBASSY
354 Stewart Street
Ottawa — Canada

I.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union notes with satisfaction that the decisions of the historic 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union met with the complete approval and warm support of our whole Party, of the entire Soviet people, the fraternal communist and workers' parties, the working people of the great community of socialist countries, and millions of people in capitalist and colonial countries. This is understandable, since the 20th Congress of the Party, marking a new stage in the creative development of Marxism-Leninism, gave a profound analysis of the present situation at home and abroad, armed the Communist Party and the entire Soviet people with a magnificent plan of further struggle for building Communism, opened up new perspectives for joint activity by all working-class parties for averting the threat of a new war, for the interests of the working people.

Working to carry out the decisions of the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. the Soviet people under the leadership of the Communist Party are achieving fresh outstanding successes in all spheres of the political, economic, and cultural life of the country. The Soviet people have rallied still closer around the Communist Party and are displaying a high degree of creative activity in working to fulfill the tasks set by the 20th Congress.

At the same time the period that has elapsed since the Congress has shown the great vital force its decisions have for the international communist and labour movement, for the struggle of all progressive forces for strengthening world peace. The important theoretical concepts of a principled nature advanced by the Congress on the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems, on the possibility of preventing war in the present epoch, and on the diversity of forms of the transition of countries to Socialism, are having a beneficial influence upon the international situation and are facilitating the relaxation of tension, the strengthening of unity of action of all forces fighting for peace and democracy, and are further consolidating the positions of the world system of Socialism.

While the historic decisions of the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. have evoked great enthusiasm and a fresh upsurge of creative initiative and revolutionary energy among the Soviet people, among the working people of the People's Democracies, and throughout the world, in the camp of the enemies of the working class they have engendered alarm and animosity. The reactionary circles of the U.S.A. and certain other capitalist powers are clearly disquieted at the great programme of struggle for the consolidation of peace outlined by the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. Their disquiet is mounting as this programme is being carried out actively and consistently.

Why are the enemies of Communism and Socialism concentrating their fire on the shortcomings pointed out by the Central Committee of our Party at the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U.? They are doing this to divert the attention of the working class and its parties from the *main* questions which were advanced at the 20th Congress of the Party and which pave the way for fresh successes in the cause of peace, Socialism and working-class unity.

The decisions of the 20th Congress of the Party, and the home and foreign policy of the Soviet Government, have sown confusion among imperialist circles in the U.S.A. and other states.

The U.S.S.R.'s courageous and consistent foreign policy of ensuring peace and co-operation among states, regardless of their social system, meets with the support of the broad masses in all countries of the world: it extends the front of peaceful states and gives rise to a profound crisis in the "cold war" policy, the policy of forming military blocs, the policy of the arms race. It is not fortuitous that the greatest hue and cry about the struggle against the cult of the individual in the U.S.S.R. was raised by imperialist circles in the U.S.A. The existence of negative aspects associated with the cult of the individual was to their advantage, since they could use these facts in the fight against Socialism. Now that our Party is courageously overcoming the consequences of the cult of the individual, the imperialists regard this as a factor accelerating the advance of our country to Communism, and weakening the positions of capitalism.

In an endeavour to weaken the great force of attraction of the decisions of the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. and their influence upon the broad masses, the ideologists of capitalism are resorting to all sorts of tricks and machinations to divert the attention of the working people from the progressive and inspiring ideas placed before mankind by the socialist world.

A big anti-Soviet slander campaign has been launched recently in the bourgeois press and reactionary circles are trying to utilize, as a pretext for this campaign, certain facts connected with the cult of J. V. Stalin which has been condemned by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The organizers of this campaign are doing everything they can to obscure the situation, to conceal the fact that this is a stage that is past and gone in the life of the Soviet Union; they also want to hush up and distort the fact that in the years since Stalin's death the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Government have been eradicating the consequences of the cult of the individual with the greatest consistency and resoluteness, and that they are successfully carrying out new tasks in the interests of consolidating peace and building Communism, in the interests of the broad masses of the people.

In developing their slander campaign, the bourgeois ideologists are vainly trying once more to vilify the great ideas of Marxism-Leninism, to undermine the confidence of the working people in the first country of Socialism in the world—the U.S.S.R.—and to sow confusion in the ranks of the international communist and labour movement.

Past experience tells us that the enemies of the international unity of the proletariat have on many occasions attempted to use what they considered to be advantageous moments to undermine the international unity of the communist and workers' parties, to split the international labour movement and weaken the forces of the socialist camp. But each time, the communist and workers' parties forestalled the manoeuvres of the enemies of Socialism and closed their ranks still more, demonstrating their unbreakable, political unity, their unflinching loyalty to the ideas of Marxism-Leninism.

The fraternal communist and workers' parties exposed in good time this manoeuvre of the enemies of Socialism, too, and are giving it the rebuff it deserves. At the same time it would be wrong to shut one's eyes to the fact that some of our friends abroad have not fully understood the problem of the cult of the individual and its consequences, and at times make erroneous interpretations of certain aspects of this cult.

In its criticism of the cult of the individual, the Party proceeds on the basis of the principles of Marxism-Leninism. For more than three years our Party has been consistently fighting against the cult of J. V. Stalin, persistently overcoming its harmful consequences. This question, naturally, took a pro-

minent place in the work of the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. and in its decisions. The Congress noted that the Central Committee had taken perfectly correct and timely action against the cult of the individual, the spread of which meant a belittling of the role of the Party and the masses, led to an underestimation of the role of collective leadership in the Party and on many occasions to serious shortcomings in work and gross violations of socialist law. The Congress instructed the Central Committee to take consistent measures to ensure the complete overcoming of the cult of the individual, so alien to Marxism-Leninism, the eradication of its consequences in all the spheres of Party, state and ideological work, and the strict observance of the rules of Party life and the principles of collective Party leadership worked out by the great Lenin.

In its struggle against the cult of the individual, the Party is guided by the well-known teachings of Marxism-Leninism concerning the role of the masses, the Party and the individual in history, concerning the impermissibility of the cult of a political leader, no matter how great his merits. Karl Marx, the founder of scientific Communism, emphasising his dislike "for every cult of the individual", said that his and Frederick Engels' initiation into the society of communists "was made subject to the condition that everything contributing to the superstitious genuflection before authorities would be erased from the Charter." (K. Marx and F. Engels, Works, Volume 26, Russian edition 1, pp. 487-488.)

In building our Communist Party, V. I. Lenin fought uncompromisingly against the anti-Marxist concept of "the hero" and "the crowd" and resolutely condemned the counterposing of a single hero to the masses. "The intellect of scores of millions of creators", V. I. Lenin said, "gives something which is immeasurably higher than the greatest foresight of the genius". (Works, Vol. 26, Russian edition, page 431).

Advancing the question of the fight against the cult of the individual in relation to J. V. Stalin, the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. proceeded from the fact that the cult of the individual was in contradiction to the very nature of the socialist system and was becoming a hindrance to the development of socialist democracy and the advance of Soviet society to Communism.

On the initiative of the Central Committee, the 20th Congress of the Party found it necessary to speak openly and boldly about the serious consequences of the cult of the individual,

about the grave mistakes which were made during the last period of Stalin's life and to call upon the whole Party to make a common effort to eliminate all that the cult of the individual had entailed. In doing this, the Central Committee was aware that a frank acknowledgement of mistakes made would be somewhat disadvantageous and damaging and that our enemies could turn all this to account. The bold and merciless self-criticism concerning the cult of the individual was another clear manifestation of the strength and firmness of our Party and the Soviet socialist system. It can be said with certainty that no ruling party in any capitalist country could ever take the risk of such a step. On the contrary, they would try to hush up such unpleasant facts and conceal them from the people. But the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, brought up on the revolutionary principles of Marxism-Leninism, told the whole truth, no matter how bitter it was. The Party took this step solely on its own initiative, being guided by considerations of principle. It proceeded on the assumption that if the action against the cult of Stalin did give rise to certain temporary difficulties, nevertheless, from the point of view of the fundamental interests and ultimate goals of the working class, it would, in the long run, yield a tremendous positive result. Thus there are firm guarantees that never again in our Party or in our country can anything like the cult of the individual appear, and that the leadership of the Party and the country will in future be carried out collectively on the basis of a Marxist-Leninist policy, in conditions of broad inner-Party democracy, with the active creative participation of millions of working people and with the all-round development of Soviet democracy.

By resolutely opposing the cult of the individual and its consequences and openly criticising the mistakes engendered by it, the Party once again manifested its loyalty to the immortal principles of Marxism-Leninism, its devotion to the interests of the people, its concern that the best possible conditions be created for the development of Party and Soviet democracy in the interests of the successful construction of Communism in our country.

The Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. notes that in Party organisations and at general meetings of working people, Party members and non-Party people took a most active part in the discussion on the cult of the individual and its consequences, and that the line of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. met with the complete approval and support of the Party members and the entire people.

The facts about the violation of socialist law and other mistakes connected with the cult of J. V. Stalin, which were made public by the Party, naturally evoke feelings of bitterness and profound regret. However, the Soviet people understand that the condemnation of the cult of the individual was necessary in the interests of building Communism, in which they are active participants. The Soviet people see that in recent years the Party has taken consistent practical steps to eradicate the consequences of the cult of the individual in all spheres of Party, state, economic, and cultural development. As a result of this work the Party, whose internal forces are no longer fettered in any way, has come still closer to the people and is now in a state of unprecedented creative activity.

II

How could the cult of Stalin, with all its negative consequences, originate and spread under the Soviet socialist system?

In analysing this question, one has to bear in mind the objective, concrete historical conditions in which socialist construction took place in the U.S.S.R. and, also, certain subjective factors connected with Stalin's personal qualities.

The October Socialist Revolution has gone down in history as a classic example of the revolutionary transformation of capitalist society carried out under the leadership of the working class. The Communist parties of other countries and all progressive and democratic forces learn from the heroic struggle of the Bolshevik Party, of the first socialist state in the world—the U.S.S.R.—how to solve fundamental social questions of the present-day development of society. Throughout the almost 40 years of the building of socialist society by the working people of our country great experience has been accumulated, which is studied and creatively applied by the working people of other socialist countries in accordance with their concrete conditions.

This was the first experience in history of building a socialist society, which was formed in the process of seeking solutions, of trying out in practice many concepts previously known to socialists only in general outline, in theory. For more than a quarter of a century the Soviet Union was the only country paving mankind's way forward to Socialism. It was like a beleaguered fortress encircled by capitalism.

After the failure of the intervention by 14 states in 1918-1920, the enemies of the Soviet country in the West and in the East continued to prepare new "crusades" against the U.S.S.R. They smuggled into the U.S.S.R. great numbers of spies and saboteurs, trying by all possible means to undermine the first socialist state in the world. The threat of a fresh imperialist act of aggression against the U.S.S.R. grew particularly with the rise to power of fascism in Germany in 1933, which proclaimed as its goal the destruction of Communism, the destruction of the Soviet Union—the first working people's state in the world. Everybody remembers the establishment of the so-called "anti-Comintern pact," and the "Berlin-Rome-Tokyo axis," which were actively supported by all forces of international reaction. With the growing threat of a new war and the Western Powers' rejection of measures repeatedly put forward by the Soviet Union for curbing fascism and organizing collective security, the Soviet country was forced to exert all its efforts to strengthen its defence capacity and to combat the schemes of the hostile capitalist countries encircling it. The Party had to educate the people in a spirit of constant vigilance and preparedness in the face of enemies outside the country.

The schemes of international reaction were all the more dangerous since a bitter class struggle had been waged within the country over a long period. The question of "Who will win?" was being decided. With Lenin's death, the supporters of hostile trends within the Party became more active. They were the Trotskyists, right-wing opportunists, and bourgeois nationalists, who advocated the abandonment of Lenin's theory of the possibility of the victory of Socialism in one country, which in fact would have led to the restoration of capitalism in the U.S.S.R. The Party launched a ruthless struggle against these enemies of Leninism.

Following Lenin's behests, the Communist Party took the course of carrying through the socialist industrialization of the country, the collectivization of agriculture and the cultural revolution. In fulfilling these immense tasks of building a socialist society within one country on its own, the Soviet people and the Communist Party had to overcome enormous difficulties and obstacles. In a very brief period of history, without any external economic assistance, our country had to throw off its centuries-old backwardness and put its whole national economy on to a new socialist footing.

This difficult international and internal situation required iron discipline, a tireless heightening of vigilance, and the strict-

est centralization of leadership, which could not but have a negative effect upon the development of some forms of democracy. In the course of bitter struggle against the whole world of imperialism our country had to make certain restrictions on democracy, which were justified by the logics of our people's struggle for Socialism in conditions of capitalist encirclement. However, even then these restrictions were regarded by the Party and the people as temporary ones, which would have to be eliminated as the Soviet state grew stronger and the forces of democracy and Socialism developed throughout the world. The people knowingly made these temporary sacrifices, watching the Soviet socialist system making more and more progress day by day.

All these difficulties along the road of socialist construction were overcome by the Soviet people under the leadership of the Communist Party and its Central Committee which consistently followed Lenin's general line.

The victory of Socialism in our country, in conditions of hostile encirclement and under constant threat of attack from without, was a historic achievement of the Soviet people, one of world significance. During the first five-year plans, the economically backward country made a giant leap forward in its economic and cultural development as a result of tremendous and heroic efforts made by the people and the Party. On the basis of the progress made in socialist construction, the living standards of the working people were raised and unemployment was done away with for ever. The country experienced a far-reaching cultural revolution. In a brief space of time, the Soviet people developed numerous cadres of technicians and engineers who were up to the level of world technical development and gained for Soviet science and technology one of the first places in the world. The great Party of Communists was the inspirer and organizer of these victories. From the example of the U.S.S.R., the working people of the whole world saw that the workers and peasants, having taken power into their own hands, could successfully build and develop their socialist state without the capitalists and landlords, expressing and defending the interests of the broad mass of the people. All this played a tremendous and inspiring role in increasing the influence of the communist and workers' parties in all countries of the world.

As General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party over a long period, J. V. Stalin, together with other leaders, worked actively to carry out Lenin's behests. He

was devoted to Marxism-Leninism and as a theoretician and a great organizer headed the struggle of the Party against the Trotskyists, right-wing opportunists, and bourgeois nationalists, against the intrigues of the capitalist powers encircling the Soviet Union. In this political and ideological struggle Stalin won great prestige and popularity. However, all our great victories began to be erroneously associated with his name. The victories achieved by the Communist Party and the Soviet Union and the eulogies addressed to Stalin turned his head. It was in this situation that the cult of Stalin gradually took shape.

The development of the cult of the individual was to a great extent facilitated by certain individual qualities of J. V. Stalin, the negative nature of which had been pointed out by V. I. Lenin. Towards the close of 1922, Lenin addressed a letter to the Party Congress saying:—

"After becoming General Secretary, Comrade Stalin accumulated in his hands immeasurable power, and I am not certain whether he will always be able to use this power with the required care." In a further letter, written at the beginning of January 1923, V. I. Lenin again returned to certain of Stalin's personal qualities which were intolerable in a leader. "Stalin is too rude", Lenin wrote, "and this defect, which can be freely tolerated in our midst and in contacts among us Communists, becomes a defect which cannot be tolerated in one holding the position of General Secretary. Because of this I propose that the comrades consider means of transferring Stalin from this position and of selecting another man for it, a man who would differ from Stalin in only one quality, namely, greater tolerance, greater loyalty, greater kindness and a more considerate attitude to the comrades, a less capricious temper, etc."

At the 13th Congress of the Party held shortly after V. I. Lenin's death, his letters were brought to the notice of the delegations. As a result of the discussion on these documents, it was found expedient to retain Stalin in the post of General Secretary, with the hope, however, that he would heed the critical remarks of V. I. Lenin and would draw all the necessary conclusions.

Remaining in the position of General Secretary of the Central Committee, Stalin in the first period after the death of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin heeded his critical remarks. However, later on Stalin immeasurably overestimated his own merits and came to believe he was infallible. He began to make certain limitations in inner-Party and Soviet democracy, which had been

unavoidable during the bitter struggle against the class enemy and its agents and subsequently during the war against the German fascist invaders, the rule of inner-Party and state life, grossly violating Lenin's principles of leadership. The plenary meetings of the Central Committee and the Party Congresses were held irregularly and then for many years were not convened at all. Stalin, in fact, was above criticism.

Great harm to the cause of socialist construction and to the development of democracy within the Party and the state was inflicted by an erroneous formula of Stalin's which alleged that as the Soviet Union advanced to Socialism, the class struggle would grow sharper and sharper. This formula, correct only for certain stages of the transition period when the question at issue was "Who will win?", when a stubborn class struggle was being waged for building the foundations of Socialism, was brought to the fore in 1937, at a time when Socialism had triumphed in our country, when the exploiting classes and their economic basis had been eliminated. In practice, this erroneous theoretical formula served as a justification for gross violation of socialist law and mass acts of repression.

It was in these conditions that a special position was created for the organs of state security, in particular, which enjoyed great confidence because of their undoubted services to the people and the country in defending the achievements of the revolution. For a long time the organs of state security justified that confidence, and their special position aroused no danger. Things changed when instead of these organs being controlled by the Party and the Government, personal control by Stalin was gradually substituted, while his personal decisions often replaced the usual administration of justice. The situation became still graver when the criminal gang of Beria, the agent of international imperialism, appeared at the head of the organs of state security. There were gross violations of Soviet law and mass acts of repression. As a result of the enemy intrigues, many honest Communists and non-Party Soviet people were slandered and suffered innocently.

The 20th Congress of the Party and the entire policy of the Central Committee since Stalin's death clearly prove that there was in being a Leninist core of leaders within the Central Committee, who had a correct understanding of the pressing requirements in the spheres of home and foreign policy. It cannot be said that there was no opposition to the negative phenomena associated with the cult of the individual which hindered

the advance of Socialism. Moreover, there were certain periods, as for example during the war, when the unilateral acts of Stalin were sharply restricted, when the negative consequences of lawlessness, of arbitrary rule, etc., were materially weakened.

It is known that it was during the war that members of the Central Committee and also outstanding Soviet military commanders took into their hands certain spheres of activity in the rear and at the front, took independent decisions, and by their organizational, political, economic and military work jointly with local Party and Soviet organizations ensured victory for the Soviet people in the war. After the victory, the negative consequences of the cult of the individual began to make themselves felt again with great force.

Immediately after the death of Stalin, the Leninist core of the Central Committee took the line of decisive struggle against the cult of the individual and its grave consequences. A question may arise: why was it that these same people did not openly come out against Stalin and remove him from leadership? In the existing conditions this was impossible. There is no doubt that the facts show Stalin to have been guilty of many lawless acts, particularly in the final period of his life. At the same time it should not be forgotten that the Soviet peoples knew Stalin as a man who always came out in defence of the U.S.S.R. against enemy intrigues and fought for the cause of Socialism. At times in this struggle he employed unworthy methods and violated Lenin's principles and rules of Party life. Herein lay Stalin's tragedy. However, the total effect of all this was to handicap the struggle against the lawless acts which were then being perpetrated, since the successes of socialist construction, of the consolidation of the U.S.S.R. were in the existing conditions of the cult of the individual ascribed to Stalin.

Any opposition to Stalin in those conditions would not have been understood by the people, and the question here is by no means one of lack of personal courage. It is clear that anyone coming out against Stalin in this situation would not have had the support of the people. Moreover, in the circumstances, any such action would have been regarded as an act against the cause of socialist construction, as something extremely dangerous in conditions of capitalist encirclement, undermining the unity of the Party and the entire state. Moreover, the successes accomplished by the working people of the Soviet Union under the leadership of their Communist Party had instilled legitimate pride into the heart of every Soviet man and created an atmosphere in which individual mistakes and shortcomings seemed less

significant against the background of tremendous successes, while the negative consequences of these mistakes were swiftly compensated for by the colossal growth of the vital forces of the Party and Soviet society.

It should also be borne in mind that many facts and incorrect actions by Stalin, particularly as regards violation of Soviet law, became known only recently, after Stalin's death, mainly in connection with the exposure of Beria's gang and the establishment of Party control over the state security organs.

These are the main conditions and causes which led to the origin and spread of the cult of Stalin. Naturally this explains, but in no way justifies, the cult of Stalin and its consequences, which have been so sharply and justly condemned by our Party.

III

There is no doubt that the cult of the individual inflicted serious damage to the cause of the Communist Party and Soviet society. However, it would be a great mistake to conclude that the existence of the cult of the individual in the past has led to any changes in the social system of the U.S.S.R. or to see the origin of this cult in the nature of the Soviet social system. Both attitudes are absolutely wrong since they do not correspond to reality, they contradict the facts.

Despite all the evil it did to the Party and the people, the cult of Stalin could not and did not change the nature of our social system. No cult of the individual could change the nature of the socialist state, which is based upon the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, and the friendship of peoples, though this cult did do serious damage to the development of socialist democracy, to the development of the creative initiative of millions of people.

To think that any individual, even so great a one as Stalin, could change our social and political system is to go completely against the facts, against Marxism and truth, to lapse into idealism. It would mean attributing to an individual such abnormal and supernatural forces as the ability to change the system of society, especially of a social system where the decisive force lies in the millions-strong masses of the working people.

As is known, the nature of a social and political system is determined by the mode of production, by ownership of the means of production, by the class which holds the political power.

The entire world knows that as a result of the October Revolution and the victory of Socialism, the socialist system of production was established in our country, that power has been in the hands of the working class and the peasantry for almost 40 years now. This is why the Soviet social system becomes stronger year by year, why its productive forces grow. Even our ill-wishers cannot help acknowledging this fact.

The consequences of the cult of the individual, as is known, have been expressed in certain serious mistakes in the leadership of different branches of Party and state activity, both in the internal life of the Soviet Union and in its foreign policy. In particular, serious mistakes made by Stalin can be indicated in the direction of agriculture, in the organization of the country's preparedness to repulse the fascist invaders, the gross exercise of arbitrary power which led to the conflict in relations with Yugoslavia in the post-war period. These mistakes had a harmful effect on the development of certain aspects of the life of the Soviet state and hindered, particularly in the last years of J. V. Stalin's life, the development of Soviet society. However, it is evident that they did not lead Soviet society away from the correct road of advance to Communism.

Our enemies allege that the cult of Stalin was engendered not by certain historic conditions which have already become a thing of the past, but by the Soviet system itself, by what they claim to be its lack of democracy, etc. Such slanderous assertions are refuted by the whole history of the Soviet state. The Soviets, as a new democratic form of state power, grew out of the revolutionary work of the broad masses who rose to fight for freedom. They were and remain organs of true people's power. It is precisely this Soviet system that made it possible to unleash the tremendous creative energy of the people. It set in motion the inexhaustible forces inherent in the people, drew millions of people into conscientious management of the state, into active creative participation in the construction of Socialism. In a historically short period the Soviet state emerged victorious from the most terrible ordeals, stood the test of fire of the Second World War.

When the last exploiting classes had been liquidated in our country, when Socialism had become the system governing the whole national economy, and the situation of our country in relation to the world had changed radically, the bounds of Soviet democracy expanded enormously, and they continue to expand. In contrast to all kinds of bourgeois democracy, Soviet

democracy not only proclaims but materially guarantees to every member of society without exception the right to work, education, and rest, to participation in state affairs, to freedom of speech, of the press, of conscience, and also a real possibility of the free development of individual abilities and all other democratic rights and freedoms. The essence of democracy does not lie in its formal outward signs, the crux of the matter is whether political power serves and reflects the will and the fundamental interests of the majority of the people, the interests of the working people. The entire internal and foreign policy of the Soviet state shows that our system is a truly democratic, truly a people's system. The supreme aim of the Soviet state and its daily concern is to bring about the greatest possible improvement in the living standards of the population, to ensure a life of peace for its people.

An expression of the further development of Soviet democracy is to be found in the Party and Government measures for the extension of the rights and authority of the Union Republics, the strict observance of law, the rearrangement of the system of planning in order to encourage local initiative, to make the local Soviets more active, to develop criticism and self-criticism.

Notwithstanding the cult of the individual and in spite of it, the powerful initiative of the mass of the people led by the Communist Party, the initiative brought into being by our system, continued to carry out its great historic task, overcoming all obstacles on the road to the construction of Socialism. And herein lies the highest expression of the democracy of the Soviet socialist system. The outstanding victories of Socialism in our country did not come about by themselves. They were achieved through the tremendous organizational and educative activity of the Party and of its local organizations, through the fact that the Party always educated its cadres and all Communists in the spirit of loyalty to Marxism-Leninism, in the spirit of devotion to the cause of Communism. The strength of Soviet society lies in the consciousness of the masses. Its historic destiny has been determined and is being determined by the creative work of our heroic working class, of our glorious collective-farm peasantry and people's intelligentsia.

In eradicating the consequences of the cult of the individual, restoring the Bolshevik rules of Party life, and developing socialist democracy, our Party has further strengthened its links with the masses, has rallied the masses still closer under the great banner of Lenin.

The very fact that the Party itself courageously and openly raised the question of putting an end to the cult of the individual, of the impermissible mistakes made by Stalin, is convincing proof that the Party firmly defends Leninism, the cause of Socialism and Communism, the observance of socialist law, and the interests of the peoples, and guarantees the rights of Soviet citizens. This is the best proof of the strength and vitality of the Soviet socialist system. At the same time it is evidence of the determination to overcome once and for all the consequences of the cult of the individual and to prevent the repetition of such mistakes in the future.

Our Party's condemnation of the cult of J. V. Stalin and its consequences has evoked approval and widespread comment in all the fraternal communist and workers' parties. Pointing out the tremendous significance of the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. for the entire international Communist and labour movement, Communists in foreign countries regard the struggle against the cult of the individual and its consequences as a struggle for the purity of the principles of Marxism-Leninism, for a creative approach to the solution of the present-day problems of the international labour movement, for the consolidation and further development of the principles of proletarian internationalism.

The statements of a number of fraternal communist parties approve and support the measures taken by our Party against the cult of the individual and its consequences. "Jenminjhpao", organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, devoted an editorial to the conclusions drawn by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China after discussion on the decisions of the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. Under the heading "On the Historic Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" the editorial said: —"The Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in keeping with Lenin's behests, has taken a serious view of certain grave mistakes made by Stalin in the direction of socialist construction, and their consequences. In view of the seriousness of these consequences, it was necessary for the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to clearly reveal the essence of Stalin's mistakes, while at the same time acknowledging the great merits of Stalin, and to call upon the whole Party to beware of any repetition of these mistakes and to resolutely uproot the unhealthy consequences resulting from them. We Communists of China are deeply convinced that after the sharp criticism which took place at the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U., all the active factors that were strongly restrained in the past owing to certain political errors, will with-

out doubt be set in motion everywhere, and that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet people will be rallied and united more than ever before in their struggle to build a great Communist society unprecedented in the history of the world, in the struggle for a stable peace throughout the world."

"The merit of the leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union", reads the statement of the Political Bureau of the French Communist Party, "is that they undertook to correct the errors and faults associated with the cult of the individual, which proves the strength and unity of the great Party of Lenin, the confidence which it enjoys with the Soviet people, and also its prestige in the international labour movement."

Comrade Eugene Dennis, General Secretary of the National Committee of the Communist Party of the United States of America, referring to the tremendous significance of the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U., states in an article: "The 20th Congress strengthened world peace and social progress. It marked a new stage in the advancement of Socialism and in the struggle for peaceful coexistence that began in Lenin's days, continued in the following years, and is becoming ever more effective and successful."

At the same time it should be noted that in discussing the question of the cult of the individual, there is not always a correct interpretation of the causes of the cult of the individual and its consequences for our social system. For example, in Comrade Togliatti's comprehensive and interesting interview to the magazine "Nuovi Argomenti", besides the many very important and correct conclusions, there are also wrong concepts. In particular, one cannot agree with Comrade Togliatti's raising the issue of whether the Soviet society had not arrived at "certain forms of degeneration?" There is no ground for raising such an issue. It is the more difficult to understand since in another part of his interview Comrade Togliatti quite correctly says:

"The conclusion should be drawn that the essence of the socialist system was not lost, for none of the previous gains were lost, and, that is most important, nor was there any loss in the support of the system by the masses of workers, peasants and intellectuals, who form Soviet society. This very support shows that in spite of everything this society has preserved its fundamentally democratic nature."

Indeed, without the support of the broadest masses of the people for Soviet power and the policy of the Communist Party, our country would not have been able to create a mighty socialist industry, to bring about the collectivization of agriculture in an unprecedentedly brief period; it could not have won the Second World War, on whose outcome hung the fate of all mankind. As a result of the complete rout of Hitlerism, Italian fascism and Japanese militarism, the forces of the communist movement have developed on a wide scale; the communist parties of Italy, France, and other capitalist countries, have grown and become mass parties; the people's democratic system has been established in a number of European and Asian countries; the world system of Socialism has come into being and become consolidated; the national-liberation movement, which has brought about the disintegration of the colonial system of imperialism, has attained unprecedented successes.

IV.

Unanimously approving the decisions of the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U., which condemned the cult of the individual, the Communists and all the Soviet people, regard them as evidence of the growing power of our Party, of its Leninist principles, unity and solidarity. "The Party of the revolutionary proletariat", V. I. Lenin pointed out, "is sufficiently strong to openly criticize itself, to bluntly call a mistake and a weakness a mistake and a weakness." (Vol. XXI, p. 150, Russian edition). Guided by this Leninist principle our Party will continue to boldly disclose, to openly criticize and to resolutely eliminate mistakes and blunders in its work.

The Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. considers that the work so far accomplished by the Party in overcoming the cult of the individual and its consequences has already yielded positive results.

Proceeding from the decisions of the 20th Congress of the Communist Party, the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. calls upon all Party organizations:

Consistently to adhere in all our work to the most important principles of the teaching of Marxism-Leninism on the people as the makers of history, the creators of all the material and intellectual wealth of mankind, on the decisive role of the Marxist party in the revolutionary struggle for the transformation of society, for the victory of Communism;

persistently to continue the work conducted in recent years by the Central Committee of the Party to ensure the strictest observance by all Party organizations, from top to bottom, of the Leninist principles of Party leadership and primarily of the supreme principle of collective leadership, the observance of the rules of Party life, as laid down in the Rules of our Party, of developing criticism and self-criticism.

to fully restore the principles of Soviet socialist democracy expressed in the Constitution of the Soviet Union, to fully correct violations of revolutionary socialist law;

to mobilize our cadres, all Communists and the broadest masses of the working people, to work for the practical realization of the targets of the Sixth Five-Year Plan, giving full rein to the creative initiative and energy of the masses—the true makers of history—to achieve this end.

The 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. pointed out that the most important feature of our epoch is the conversion of Socialism into a world system. The most difficult period in the development and consolidation of Socialism now lies behind us. Our socialist country has ceased to be a lone island in an ocean of capitalist states. Today more than one-third of humanity is building a new life under the banner of Socialism. The ideas of Socialism are winning over many millions of people in the countries of capitalism. The influence of the ideas of Socialism upon the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, who are fighting against all forms of colonialism, is tremendous.

The decisions of the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. are regarded by all those who want peace and Socialism, by all democratic and progressive circles, as an inspiring programme of struggle for the consolidation of peace throughout the world, for the interests of the working class, for the triumph of the cause of Socialism.

Under present-day conditions, the communist parties and the whole international labour movement face broad inspiring prospects of working together with all peace-loving forces and preventing a new world war; of curbing the monopolies and ensuring lasting peace and the security of all the peoples; of putting an end to the arms race and lifting from the shoulders of the working people the heavy burden of taxation it brings with it; of fighting for the preservation of the democratic rights and liberties which facilitate the workers' struggle for a better life and a bright future. This is what the millions of ordinary people of every country of the world are vitally interested in.

The successful solution of these problems is facilitated to a tremendous degree by the peaceful policy and increasing successes of the Soviet Union, the Chinese People's Republic, and all the other countries advancing along the road to Socialism.

Under the new historical conditions, such international working-class organizations as the Comintern and the Cominform have ceased their activities, but this does not mean at all that international solidarity has lost its significance and that there is no longer any need for contact among the fraternal revolutionary parties guided by the principles of Marxism-Leninism. At the present time, when the forces of Socialism and the influence of socialist ideas have grown immeasurably throughout the world, when different paths to Socialism are being revealed in various countries, the Marxist working-class parties must, of course, preserve and consolidate their ideological unity and international fraternal solidarity in the fight against the threat of a new war, in the fight against the anti-popular forces of monopoly capital, which attempt to suppress all revolutionary and progressive movements. The communist parties are welded together by their great aim of freeing the working class from the yoke of capital, they are united by their loyalty to the scientific ideology of Marxism-Leninism and the spirit of proletarian internationalism, by selfless devotion to the interests of the people.

In present-day conditions, all communist parties carry on their activity according to the national peculiarities and conditions of every country, expressing to the full the national interests of their people. At the same time, understanding that the struggle for the interests of the working class, for peace and the national independence of their countries is at the same time, the cause of the entire international proletariat, they consolidate their ranks and strengthen the links and co-operation among themselves. The ideological consolidation and fraternal solidarity of the Marxist parties of the working class in different countries are all the more necessary since the capitalist monopolies are creating their own aggressive international alliances and blocs such as N.A.T.O., S.E.A.T.O., and the Bagdad Pact, directed against the peace-loving peoples, against the national-liberation movements, against the working class and the vital interests of the working people.

While the Soviet Union has done much and is still doing much for the relaxation of international tension—and this is now recognized by everybody—American monopoly capital continues to allocate large sums for stepping up subversive activities in the socialist countries. When the cold war was at its height,

the American Congress, as is well known, officially earmarked (in addition to the funds which are allotted unofficially) 100-million dollars for subversive activities in the People's Democracies and in the Soviet Union. Now that the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries are doing everything to relax international tension, the "cold war" proponents are trying once more to whip up the "cold war" which has been condemned by the people of the whole world. This is revealed by the decision of the American Senate to appropriate an additional 25-million dollars for subversive activity—which is cynically called "stimulating freedom" behind "the iron curtain".

We must soberly appraise this fact and draw the necessary conclusions from it. It is clear, for instance, that the anti-popular riots in Poznan have been paid for from this fund. However, the provocateurs and the saboteurs, who were paid with money from overseas, had only enough energy for a few hours. The working people of Poznan rebuffed these hostile ventures and provocations. The schemes of the dark knights of the "cloak and dagger" are bankrupt, their ugly provocation against the people's power in Poland has failed. All future attempts at subversive actions in the People's Democracies are similarly doomed, even though such actions are generously financed by funds assigned by the American monopolies. This money may be said to be spent in vain.

All this serves to show that we must not allow ourselves to be heedless of the further designs of imperialist agents who are seeking to worm their way into socialist countries to do harm and undermine the achievements of the working people.

The forces of imperialist reaction are seeking to divert the working people from the true road of struggle for their interests, to poison them with disbelief in the success of the cause of peace and Socialism. In spite of all the designs of the ideologists of the capitalist monopolies, the working class, headed by its tried Communist vanguard, will follow its own road, which has already led to the historic conquests of Socialism and will lead to new victories in the cause of peace, democracy, and Socialism. There can be no doubt that the communist and workers' parties of all countries will raise the glorious Marxist banner of proletarian internationalism still higher.

The Soviet people are legitimately proud of the fact that our Motherland was the first to pave the way to Socialism. Now that Socialism has become a world system, now that fraternal co-operation and mutual assistance have been established among

the socialist countries, new favourable conditions have been created for the flowering of socialist democracy, for the further consolidation of the material and industrial basis of Communism, for a steady rise in the living standards of the working people and for the all-round development of the personality of the new man—the builder of Communist society. Let the bourgeois ideologists concoct fables about the "crisis" of Communism, about "dismay" in the ranks of communist parties. It is not the first time we have heard such incantations from our enemies. Their predictions have always burst like bubbles. These sorry prophets have come and gone while the communist movement and the immortal and life-giving ideas of Marxism-Leninism have advanced from victory to victory. So it will be in the future, too. No malicious slanderous outbursts of our enemies can stop the invincible historic march of mankind towards Communism.

*Central Committee of the
Communist Party of the Soviet Union*

June 30, 1956